1608/1078.

An Antidote againſt Jacobiniſm;

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF

A SERMON,

PREACHED

MARCH 7, 1798,

THE DAY APPOINTED FOR

THE GENERAL FAST,

AT

BETHEL CHAPEL, WELWYN, HERTS.

By THOMAS OXENHAM,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT THE SAID CHAPEL.

Publiſhed by Requeſt.

THOU SHALT NOT SPEAK EVIL OF THE RULER OF THY PEOPLE. ACTS XXIII. 5.

LONDON:

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1798.

[Price Six Pence.]

TO THE

REV. THOMAS OXENHAM.

DEAR FRIEND,

WE whoſe names are hereunto ſubſcribed or underwritten, have unanimouſly agreed to requeſt you to publiſh the Sermon you preached on the Faſt Day, as it contained an exact deſcription of our ſentiments; and as God was pleaſed to bleſs us in hearing of it, we hope for a ſecond benefit, and that it may be further profitable to the church or the people of God. As there are many wicked men, both in England and France, who wiſh for the overthrow of our nation, and the worſhip of God, being influenced by Satan the father of lies, we think it our indiſpenſable duty, as far as poſſible, to exert ourſelves in this voluntary ſubſcription, begging at the ſame time, that the bleſſings of the Almighty may attend every endeavour of ours to ward off the threatened invaſion of our enemies; and that we may have the privileges continued unto us and our poſterity as we now enjoy, is the deſire

and prayer of your affectionate friends in the best bond,

A. Batten, sen.	Henry Star
Tho. Thurgood	John Troup
Eben. Robins	William Wren
Edward Batten	William Warner
Tho. Ephgrave	William Dawes

Welwyn, Herts, March 8, 1798.

P. S. We believe the above contains the sentiments (as far as we can collect) of all our members, and nearly all the congregation, five or six only excepted.

To

To Meſſrs. BATTEN, THURGOOD, &c.

Grace, Mercy, and Peace, be multiplied.

AGREEABLE to your requeſt, I here preſent you with the ſubſtance of the Sermon I delivered amongſt you. I have endeavoured to collect my thoughts, and commit them to writing, as nearly verbatim as I poſſibly could, conſidering I was on my journey to Grantham, and had ſeven times to preach in the following week.

You will find many things (without doubt) omitted, and others perhaps more enlarged upon; but, on the whole, it is as near as when preached, as by the good hand of my God upon me I was enabled to recollect.

I am well aware I ſhall not pleaſe thoſe graceleſs, lifeleſs profeſſors, who are ſwallowed up in politics, and who breathe nothing but revolution, confuſion, and murder; for anger in the heart is murder already conceived; "whoſoever hateth his brother is a murderer," 1 John iii. 15.

Many of theſe will be ready to ſay, What buſineſs hath a goſpel miniſter to take notice of, and interweave, politics in his diſcourſe? To all ſuch I would

anſwer and ſay, It is beyond all doubt the buſineſs of every ſervant of Chriſt to warn the people of the many devices of Satan; and the devil hath made politics a trap and a ſnare to many who I firmly believe are the children of God, ſome of whom have informed me how they have been entangled by theſe things, and now bleſs God for their deliverance from this awful deluſion.

The ſtudy of politics is an enemy to the proſperity of the ſoul. When the mind is entangled with them there is darkneſs and confuſion in the underſtanding; it is a bar to communion and fellowſhip with God; it draws them into the company of the world, and ſo they drink into the ſpirit of rebellion and revolt; and ſuch, if contradicted, rage vehemently, and ſo foam out their own ſhame.

If you are in their company there is no ſavour of God, no unction in their diſcourſe, nor does their converſation miniſter grace to the hearers, or tend in the leaſt to edification; but quite the reverſe. For, being filled with malice and rage, they begin to cavil and find fault with every meaſure that is purſued for the welfare and protection of the country; condemn this man, and cenſure the other: this meaſure is wrong, and the other is not right in their eyes, although theſe ſame men, whom they ſo illiberally treat, have done the beſt that human prudence could foreſee, and by theſe means irritate and ſtir up many to be evil affected; and when once the mind is ſtirred with malice, bondage and confuſion

follow

follow in the ſoul of thoſe that liſten to their inflammatory diſcourſes, and therefore the apoſtolic exhortation, " Warn the unruly."

But if the Lord makes this Sermon a means of bringing out of this ſtrong hold of Satan, this damnable deluſion of the day, any of his people who have been entangled by this error of the ungodly who lie in wait to deceive, my end and aim in printing of it will be fully anſwered.

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are ſanctified.

Your willing ſervant for Chriſt's ſake,

London, March 20, 1798.

THO. OXENHAM.

A

SERMON, &c.

2 PETER ii. 9, 10.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reſerve the unjuſt unto the day of judgment to be puniſhed.

But chiefly them that walk after the fleſh, in the luſt of uncleanneſs, and deſpiſe government. Preſumptuous are they, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities.

THE Apoſtle, in this Epiſtle, is writing to the ſtrangers ſcattered abroad through the perſecution that came upon the church in the days of Herod.

Theſe ſtrangers were happy partakers of the grace and good Spirit of God; not ſtrangers to themſelves, nor yet ſtrangers to God and the covenant of promiſe, but ſo called becauſe God had choſen them

out

out of the world, and called them to the fellowſhip of Chriſt Jeſus his Son, and they were his children by faith; therefore the world knew them not, as it knew not the Lord of life and glory when he dwelt amongſt them.

And in this chapter the apoſtle is ſetting before theſe ſtrangers, for a pattern and example, the dealings of God with his ſervants in the days of old, and the path they trod; ſhewing them, in Noah and Lot, how his hand was made known in the ſalvation of them, and in the deſtruction of their enemies; and then brings in the words of my text, "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reſerve the unjuſt unto the day of judgment to be puniſhed; but chiefly them that walk after the fleſh, in the luſt of uncleanneſs, and deſpiſe government; preſumptuous are they, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities."

In ſpeaking from theſe words I will endeavour to give you my thoughts on this paſſage in the following manner:

1ſt. What we are to underſtand by a godly man.

2d. Treat of ſome of the temptations that befall the godly, and that God knoweth how to deliver ſuch out of temptation.

3d. What we are to underſtand by an unjuſt man, and take notice of his character as here deſcribed by the apoſtle.

4th.

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4th. Of a day of judgment, and that the wicked are reſerved for the ſame.

Laſtly. Endeavour to ſhew it is our duty to ſupport the government under which we live, and give you my reaſons for the ſame.

I was, in the firſt place, to ſhew what is meant by a godly perſon.

The children of God go by various names in ſcripture; ſometimes they are called ſaints, in oppoſition to ungodly ſinners, as in Pſal. l. 5. "Gather my ſaints together to me, thoſe that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice." Sometimes they are called righteous, in oppoſition to the wicked; for ſo the Father, ſpeaking to the Son, declares, "thy children ſhall all be made righteous, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified," Iſa. lx. 21. But here, as in many other parts of ſacred writ, they are called godly; as David, in Pſal. iv. 3, "the Lord hath ſet apart the man that is godly for himſelf." They are called by the name or epithet of godly, in oppoſition to thoſe whom the apoſtle deſcribes, James iii. 15, "as earthly, ſenſual, and deviliſh."

The word *godly* ſignifies a perſon that reſembles God or bears his image, as the word *deviliſh* means a perſon who, by his actions, hatred to God, his people, and his ways, reſembles his father the devil; not in ſhape, but in heart and actions; for we are all by nature of the earth, earthy; that is, carnally-

minded; and to be carnally minded is death, but to be ſpiritually minded is life and peace. And the apoſtle declares concerning God's elect, "as we have all borne the image (likeneſs or figure) of the earthly Adam, ſo ſhall we alſo of the heavenly Adam, Chriſt Jeſus our Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 49.

But then it may be aſked, wherein this image or likeneſs conſiſts?

Why then, obſerve, it doth not conſiſt altogether in an outward appearance; for, if it had, the ſelf-righteous Phariſees in Chriſt's day, and the rigid Arminian with his downfal countenance and outward ſhew of ſanctity in our days, muſt have been, and ſtill would be, the godly people; but Chriſt ſays, "No; you appear outwardly righteous or godly, but God knoweth your hearts. You ſeek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, therefore you are of your father the devil, he was a murderer from the beginning," John viii. 44. And as it was then, ſo it is now; for theſe ſmooth-tongued gentlemen, who are ſo full of univerſal charity and candour, hate with a perfect hatred the real children of God.

Nor does it conſiſt in a bare knowledge, in the underſtanding, of the truth in the letter thereof; for then Balaam and Judas, Alexander and Demas, muſt have been godly men, for they had great light, and their gifts were aſtoniſhing. Balaam could propheſy, and ſee clearly the ſafety of God's people; Judas took part of the miniſtry, preached, and caſt out devils; Alexander ſtood ſtoning, and afterwards

turned

turned apoſtate; and Demas forſook the apoſtle, turned his back upon the good ways of God, and went into the world. But the apoſtle tells us, that there are ſome that hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs, that never were purged from ſin nor juſtified by faith, conſequently not godly people.

Now a godly perſon is one that is born again of God, and this ſpiritual birth is wholly of God, as the apoſtle John ſays, ſpeaking of thoſe that received the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and believed on his name, "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13. Such a one bears the image of God who hath created him anew in Chriſt Jeſus in righteouſneſs and true holineſs; but without a ſpiritual birth it is impoſſible for any to be godly; "for that which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, and that which is born of the Spirit is ſpirit," John iii. 6.

Now, in treating a little on this ſpiritual birth, let us examine and ſee what the good Spirit of God doth for a poor ſinner to make him a godly perſon.

In the firſt place, then, we read that God is eſſentially life; and when it pleaſes the Almighty to quicken a dead ſoul by breathing into it the breath of life, it is ſoon diſcovered, by the ſharp keen ſenſations the ſinner feels of the wrath and diſpleaſure of God, as you may plainly ſee in Peter's audience when God quickened them, they cried out, "Men and brethren, what ſhall we do to be ſaved?"

Again, this life is manifeſted by the hunger and thirſt

thirſt there is in ſuch a ſinner after the bread of life, Chriſt Jeſus; for when life is communicated to the ſoul of a poor ſinner by God, and he is wounded, diſtreſſed, and burdened, with the weight of his own ſins, a guilty conſcience, the wrath of God, and the fear of death, hell, and deſtruction, ſuch a one will mind the apoſtle's exhortation, "Fly from the wrath to come;" ſuch will call upon God in humble prayer, peruſe his word, and be diligent in the means of God's appointment, and there is a bleſſing already pronounced upon them; "Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors," Prov. viii. 34.

Now ſuch a poor ſinner as this hath life in his ſoul, and it is the good Spirit of God that hath quickened him; and though God may permit him to labour long under his burden, yet, having life in his ſoul, he will call upon God earneſtly for deliverance, which proves him to be one of God's elect. "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him? Yea, I ſay unto you, he will avenge them ſpeedily."

In the next place, we read that God is righteous. And as he hath by his Spirit convinced us of ſin, and made us feel it, ſo he goes on to convince us of the inſufficiency of our own ſuppoſed righteouſneſs, for we find that it is no covering from the wrath of God in a broken law or a guilty conſcience; but when he reveals and makes known the perfect obedience of Chriſt in fulfilling the law which we have

broken,

broken, and operates in the heart as the Spirit of faith, and enables us to believe in him and in his finiſhed work, upon our believing in Chriſt Jeſus, God himſelf declares us righteous, and the Spirit itſelf will bear his witneſs in the ſoul to the truth of it; and the ſweet fruit and effect of this we ſenſibly find is peace with God. "Being juſtified by faith we have peace with God."

In the next place, God is declared to be love. "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him, for God is love." And the Holy Ghoſt reveals the everlaſting love of God the Father in chooſing us in Chriſt before the world began, ſheds abroad the dying love of Chriſt in the heart, and himſelf operates as the Spirit of love in the ſoul, and draws the heart and affections to himſelf. I find my hard heart ſweetly ſoftened, my ſpirit contrite, my ſoul broken and melted with the goodneſs of God to the chiefeſt of ſinners.

Again, we are informed that God is light. "And he that believeth in me," ſaith a dear Redeemer, "ſhall not abide in darkneſs, but have the light of life." The Holy Ghoſt illuminates the mind, and chaſes away the darkneſs and ignorance from the underſtanding, the wrong conceptions we had of him are removed, and he condeſcends to ſhine as reconciled in the face of a dear Redeemer, ſo that we can now approach him with a holy boldneſs and humble confidence, "knowing that God was in Chriſt reconciling

conciling the world to himſelf, not imputing our treſpaſſes to us."

We are now enabled to look backward to the ancient ſettlements, and ſee that we were choſen of God in Chriſt before the world began, and therefore called according to his eternal purpoſe and grace; can look forward to death with compoſure, who heretofore was the king of terrors, for who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus? to a day of judgment without fear or dread, for who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? to eternity with delight, and, at times, by the eye of faith, behold the King in his beauty, and ſee the land that is very far off.

Again, God is ſaid to be holy: "Be ye holy as I am holy." And the ſinner that is a happy partaker of the Spirit of God, begotten to a lively hope by the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, who is created anew in righteouſneſs and true holineſs by the Spirit of God, is a holy man, for the new man is holy; it is of God, its origin, its birth, its growth; but the old man is the old man, and will remain the old man as long as we live, and therefore we read, that holy men of old ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt, and yet, ſaith the apoſtle, they were men of like paſſions with ourſelves; ſo that the Spirit luſted againſt the fleſh, and the fleſh againſt the Spirit, even in theſe holy men.

In ſhort, the poor ſinner that is called out of darkneſs

darkneſs into light, that is born again of God and begot to a lively hope, that hath a living faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and is a happy partaker of the Spirit of God, as the ſpirit of faith, of love, of power, and of a ſound mind, ſuch are godly people, and bear the image of their heavenly Father; and the tree being made good, the fruit will be good alſo.

I was, in the next place, to treat of ſome of the temptations that befall the godly; for it is declared, that all that will live godly ſhall ſuffer perſecution.

The word temptation is a comprehenſive word, and includes all kind of trouble and diſtreſs that may befall the children of God for righteouſneſs' ſake: ſometimes, when the Almighty is determined to try his people's faith and obedience, it is called a temptation, as we ſee in Abraham, for it is ſaid the Lord did tempt, that is, try, Abraham; and this temptation or trial was no leſs than the offering up of his only ſon Iſaac. Abraham obeyed, offered him up in faith, believing that God was able to raiſe him up from the dead had he ſlain him; but the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, for he delivered Abraham by calling to him from heaven.

Again, ſometimes by temptation is meant thoſe inducements to ſin which the devil and ungodly ſinners lay as ſo many baits to draw the godly aſide. In this way Joſeph was tempted to adultery by his maſter's wife, but kept by the mighty power of God, who had implanted the grace of fear in his

heart, which made him cry out, How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God! for he had a filial fear of offending him becauſe he was good; as it is written, "They ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs in the latter day."

Sometimes by temptations is meant thoſe evil ſuggeſtions, blaſphemies, and abominations, with which the devil often fills the minds and thoughts of the godly, ſo that, like a flood, it ſeems to drive all before it, which makes us cry out, with the apoſtle, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death? for when I would do good evil is preſent with me; ſo that the good I would, I do not; but the evil I would not, that do I." Poor Paul laboured under theſe temptations, and calls them meſſengers of Satan ſent to buffet him, not for his faults, but to keep him humble, and ſenſible of what he was in himſelf; and he confeſſes it was beneficial, leſt he ſhould be exalted above meaſure through the abundance of the revelation. He prays thrice for deliverance, and receives for anſwer, "My grace is ſufficient for thee." And the promiſe is, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of God ſhall lift up a ſtandard againſt him, and this ſtandard is Chriſt crucified. And the apoſtle ſays, "You ſhall not be tempted above what he will enable you to bear, but will with the temptation make a way for your eſcape."

But the temptations to which the apoſtle more particularly alludes in my text, are the ſufferings and perſecutions

perſecutions that ſhall more or leſs attend the real children of God; for Chriſt ſays, "You ſhall be hated of all men for my name's ſake;" and he that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution; and in this ſenſe James ſpeaks to the church, "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations." But if God hides his face, and tries every grace he hath been pleaſed to give us, I cannot rejoice at ſuch a ſeaſon as this; for it is in his preſence there is life, and at his right hand the fulneſs of joy for evermore. It was at ſuch a time as this that David cried out, "Why hideſt thou thyſelf from thy ſervant? Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and we ſhall be ſaved."

Nor can we rejoice when buffeted by Satan and filled with all manner of evil thoughts—No; theſe times are times of mourning and prayer; when God brings us out, we can then rejoice in the faithfulneſs and goodneſs of the Lord, and ſay, with Hezekiah, "By theſe things men live, and in all theſe things is the life of my ſpirit."

The Lord tells us, in the parable of the ſower and the ſeed, that becauſe of temptation many fall away; and explains it to be perſecution; and yet, as James ſays, many did rejoice in this hour of temptation: and Paul declares concerning the believing Jews, "You took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods, knowing in yourſelves you had a more enduring ſubſtance:" and the apoſtle Peter tells us, "That if we ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, whether in our

character, perſon, or property, to rejoice and be exceeding glad, for the Spirit of God and of glory reſts upon us;" ſo that while on their part he is evil ſpoken of, on your part he is glorified: and David expreſsly ſays, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them."

In the preceding verſes of my text the apoſtle ſets before them for examples Noah and Lot. Noah was a preacher of righteouſneſs for many years, and when that awful deſtruction came upon the world of ungodly, the Lord ſaved him and his little family, conſiſting of only eight ſouls; ſo likewiſe in the caſe of Lot, when God was determined to deſtroy the cities of the plain, he knew how to deliver juſt Lot, and brought him out from the midſt of the overthrow.

Again, we may ſee in the caſe of Hezekiah king of Judah, when Sennacherib ſent Rabſhakeh up to Jeruſalem, it was a day of trouble and temptation; and ſo ſore was it, that the king ſends off to the prophet Iſaiah to lift up his cry unto God for the remnant that was left, whilſt he himſelf goes to the temple, and ſpreads the caſe before God.

I cannot help thinking there is a great ſimiliarity between our preſent ſtate as a nation, and the Jews in that day. There was a powerful and victorious army, commanded by great generals and valiant men, that had overrun and deſtroyed the nations around that oppoſed them. Hence the great Rab-

ſhakeh

ſhakeh aſks, "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? who amongſt all theſe have delivered their land out of my hand?" Read Iſaiah xxxvi. What this man ſaid was true, they had deſtroyed many countries; and the French, having ruined and deſtroyed, overturned and changed, the government of many countries, in their pride and boaſting, now threaten this our happy iſland. They tell us they only want to deliver us from our yokes; but fully perſuaded am I, that their little finger would lay heavier on us than the loins of our preſent government.

Let us for a moment turn our eyes to Holland. That once great commercial country now ſeverely feels the yoke of French liberty; without commerce, their trade at a ſtand; contributions demanded continually, theſe raiſed under a ſyſtem of terror by the force of the ſword.

Look again to Venice; that ſtate ſold to another power to gratify their ambition. What right had they to barter and ſell a nation and a people, to annihilate the government of a republican ſtate, to force them to be under the government of one of the moſt abſolute monarchs in the univerſe? But this is one of the bleſſings of French liberty. Not a veſſel belonging to the Venetians, nor a ſtore in their arſenals that could be removed, but theſe French brethren have ſtole, under the ſpecious pretence of liberty. Not a country they enter but

heavy contributions are levied and raiſed by the force of the ſword.

They want to fraternize us, to give us the fraternal embrace; and this would be juſt like that of Joab with Amaſa, who caught him by the beard and kiſſed him, and with a dagger ſtabbed him and let out his bowels.

Their pretended friendſhip aims at no leſs than the ruin of our commerce, the deſtruction of our manufactures, the annihilation, if poſſible, of our navy, the great bulwark under God of theſe kingdoms; in fact, to beggar the nation and make us a ſervile province to France. But from ſuch falſe, deceitful, pretended brethren, I hope a good God will ever deliver us.

But though this great and powerful warrior threatened the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, did God give it into his hands? No. Read Iſa. xxxvii, and you will find that God heard the prayers of his people in the behalf of their country, and ſent a meſſage by the prophet to inform the king not to fear, nor be faint-hearted, for he would defend the city for his own name's ſake, and for his ſervant David's ſake. And let us, who have an intereſt at a throne of grace, go and do likewiſe.

The Lord tells us, Jer. xxix. 7, to pray for the peace of the city, for in the peace of the city we ſhall have peace. But ſome may ſay, the French are coming; be it ſo, they may make a deſperate attempt, they may land ſome troops, they may take

ſome

ſome towns on the coaſt, many lives may be loſt, and much devaſtation at places may be done.

So you find this great Sennacherib took moſt of the fenced cities of Judah, and ſent his ſervants quite to the gates of Jeruſalem; but in the midſt of his career, God put his hook in his noſe, turned him back by the way that he came, ſlew his mighty army, and at laſt two of his ſons ſlew him in his capital, even at Nineveh; ſo that the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.

He thus delivered Hezekiah and the people of the Jews, and I believe God will yet defend and protect this country, for the ſake of thoſe few (comparatively ſpeaking) that are in it; for he declared to Abraham, that had there been ten righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, he would have ſpared them for the ten's ſake.

My next particular was to treat of the unjuſt man.

God hath declared, that there is none doeth good, no not one, Pſalm xiv. 6. Conſequently, all are unjuſt men in his ſight by nature, and would remain ſo for ever, if God did not by an act of ſovereign grace juſtify the ungodly.

But here more particularly the apoſtle means, firſt, them that oppreſs, defraud, and go beyond their brethren, thoſe monopolizers, foreſtallers, and oppreſſors, that grind the face of the poor to enrich themſelves; theſe laugh at the calamity and diſtreſs of the poor, falſify the balance by deceit, and take

every advantage, for the unjuſt knoweth no ſhame; but God will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh, and ſooner or later break in pieces every oppreſſor.

The apoſtle deſcribes them further, as thoſe that walk after the fleſh; and to walk after the fleſh is to gratify the ſenſual appetite, to ſeek the honour of this world, to be lifted up with pride and vain conceit, to indulge the fleſh, and, in whatever corrupt nature luſts after, endeavour to gratify it; ſuch as the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life; and therefore the apoſtle Paul ſays, Rom. viii. 13, "If ye live after the fleſh ye ſhall die;" and by dying is meant (not the common lot of all mankind, but) eternal deſtruction.

But they not only walk after the fleſh, but in the luſt of uncleanneſs; and this is the caſe of every one, profeſſor or prophane, that is not born again of God and a partaker of his grace and Spirit, for they live in ſome ſin of uncleanneſs or other; ſome in adultery, ſome in drunkenneſs, and ſome in gluttony; and as the apoſtle ſays, "It is a ſhame to mention the things done of them in ſecret," for the devil reigns in and rules over them; and though many make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, yet they are like painted ſepulchres, of which the outſide appears clean, but within they are full of rottenneſs and all uncleanneſs.

Again, the apoſtle ſays theſe unjuſt men deſpiſe government. If this is the caſe, and ſo it is,

what ſhall we ſay of thoſe profeſſors who not only deſpiſe government, but vilify, ſet themſelves againſt, and oppoſe thoſe that God has placed as the head magiſtrates over a people? "For every power that is is ordained of God; by him kings reign and princes decree juſtice, and rulers are not a terror to them that do well, but to them that do evil." I am not afraid of meeting a magiſtrate, a judge, or a ſovereign, whilſt conſcious to myſelf that I have not broken the laws of my country, for they are intended of God to be a guard, not a terror to me.

God hath given us awful inſtances of his diſpleaſure againſt ſuch men and their proceedings. When God brought Iſrael out of Egypt by the hand of Moſes and Aaron, Moſes was their king, and the ſeventy elders their ſenate; and therefore it is ſaid, Deut. xxxiii. 56, "He was king in Jeſhurun when the heads of the tribes were gathered together." As a king he was their chief magiſtrate and their lawgiver under God.

But there was a ſet of men (as there is now), yea, profeſſors too, yea, the greater part were of the prieſthood of the ſons of Levi, and Iſraelites after the fleſh; theſe men deſpiſed the government of Moſes as king in Jeſhurun, and of Aaron as the high prieſt of God, gathered together an aſſembly againſt them, and plainly told them (as our jacobins now-a-days do), We have as much right to govern as you, and therefore ſaid, "Ye take too much upon you, ye Moſes and Aaron, for the people are all holy."

holy." Thus theſe men deſpiſed the government that God appointed; and let us examine a little further, and we ſhall ſee what an awful end they made.

The Lord appears and tells Moſes to go and warn the people to get away and leave the tents of theſe wicked men; and, when the warning was given, thoſe that feared God withdrew from them: as for the reſt, they were hardened, for Dathan and Abiram came forth and ſtood at their tent doors by way of deriſion and contempt, and, for aught I know, laughed at thoſe that fled from them; but their laughter was ſoon turned into ſorrow, for it is but as the crackling of thorns under a pot. God cauſed the earth to open its mouth and clave under them, ſo that they immediately ſunk into the bowels of the earth, and their ſpirits into the priſon of hell, for deſpiſing the government of Moſes and Aaron; read Numbers xvi; and as for Korah and the reſt of his companions, with their cenſers, they periſhed at the door of the tabernacle by the fire of the Lord.

And in our day great numbers in the eſtabliſhed church, and numbers who call themſelves miniſters amongſt all denominations of diſſenters, have opened their mouths wide againſt the God of heaven, and the powers that are ordained of him, and are of that number who deſpiſe government; and woe be to all ſuch!

Again, we have another awful inſtance of thoſe deſpiſers; God raiſed up his ſervant David to the throne

throne of Iſrael, anointed him to the kingdom, and ſwore to eſtabliſh him and his ſeed.

But in the days of Ahaz, king of Judah, who was a lineal deſcendant of David, the ten tribes which revolted joined in confederacy with the king of Syria, to overturn the government of the houſe of David in the land of Judah, and ſet up a creature of their own, even the ſon of Tabeal.

Wherefore we are informed, that becauſe Ephraim, the head of the ten tribes, had joined with Syria, and deſpiſed the government of David and his offſpring, the Lord declares, Iſaiah viii. 6, "Foraſmuch as this people refuſe the waters of Shiloah that go ſoftly (namely the government of David and his family), and rejoice in Rezin and the ſon of Remaliah, now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon you the waters of the river, ſtrong and many, even the king of Aſſyria and all his glory." That was his troops, which were the Aſſyrians glory; and within the ſpace of a very few years he deſtroyed the Syrians, and within about the ſpace of three ſcore and ten years the great Aſnapper carried away captive the ten tribes beyond the river, which was Euphrates, for deſpiſing the government of the houſe of David.

And he ſo ſcattered them that they have never returned to this day; and it is plain and evident, that the wild Arabs and different clans of the Tartars are the deſcendants of theſe people whom God ſcattered for deſpiſing government. This was their

 crime,

crime, for having deſpiſed the government of the houſe of David; their next ſtep was to deſpiſe the worſhip of God at Jeruſalem, and ſo fell off to the groſſeſt idolatry.

In the next place my text ſays they are likewiſe preſumptuous and ſelf-willed.

And their preſumption is plainly manifeſted, not only in deſpiſing government, but in their openly declaring that all monarchical governments are ruinous and deſtructive, and that there ought to be no kings at all. This is charging the moſt high God with folly, for he ſays, "by me kings reign;" and if they reign by his appointment, a monarchical government muſt certainly be right.

They tell us there will be no kings ſhortly; but where theſe men got their information I know not; from God they never did, nor from the word of his truth, for that tells us, when the univerſal ſpread of the goſpel takes place, "that kings ſhall be nurſing fathers, and queens nurſing mothers, to the church of God."

Again, their preſumption and ſelf-will is manifeſted by oppoſing every meaſure that is taken (either right or wrong) for the benefit of their country, and rejoicing at the death of their own countrymen when they have fell in battle, or the enemy has gained an advantage; but when God hath given us a ſignal victory (and, bleſſed be his name, he hath given many) you may perceive their countenance fall, their aſpect gloomy, an', if mentioned to them, they grin

like

like dogs, and are not ſatisfied. Why? Becauſe God hath not delivered us over to the will of our enemies, and our countrymen are not fallen by the ſword.

Theſe ſelf-willed, like Cain, would rejoice to imbrue their hands in the blood of their countrymen, if they could but eſtabliſh their own preſumptuous ſyſtem; one in my own neighbourhood openly declared, ſome time back, that he would willingly waſh his hands in the blood of the firſt characters in the nation.

The laſt deſcription of theſe men is, that they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities or dignitaries.

And what character have they not vilified, from the king on the throne to the loweſt loyal ſubject? The king, his miniſters, the officers of ſtate, the houſes of parliament, our generals, admirals, and all in office or employment, they have the impudence to declare are all rogues; and they, to be ſure, the only honeſt men in the nation: and as for the honeſt, loyal, induſtrious tradeſman, mechanic, or labourer, that will not join with them in their mad attempts to overturn, ruin, and deſolate their country, they give them the epithet of fools.

And what is the general character of theſe men? Is it not thoſe that by exceſs and diſſipation have nearly run through and ſpent their property, and have little or nothing at ſtake? or thoſe that have got almoſt into every body's debt that would credit

dit them, and have not a principle of honesty to labour to discharge the same? These men ardently wish for a revolution to clear them from debt; and the other, that they may enrich themselves by plunder, rapine, and murder.

This is the spirit of those men that wish to fraternize us? But what says the apostle in my text? Why, God reserves these wicked men to the day of judgment to be punished.

God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by Christ Jesus, and from his bar not one of these unjust men shall ever fly, they shall there give an account of the deeds done in the body; and what an awful account will many, yea, even professors, have to give, when the secrets of all hearts will be opened, and all their murderous, mischievous thoughts, that they have plotted by night, on their beds and elsewhere, and which they would have carried into execution, had they not been restrained by wholesome laws, and awed by the powers that are ordained of God!

I would not have the murderous thoughts, thefts, and rapine, to answer for as these men will have at the bar of God, if they die in their present state, for ten thousand worlds; for he declares that he that is angry with his brother is a murderer.

Sometimes a day of judgment overtakes a sinner in this world, as it is written, "God is known by the judgment he executeth," Psalm ix. 16. The

judgment

judgment of God fell upon the cities of the plain for their ſins: it came upon Pharaoh and all his hoſt for attempting to deſtroy God's people Iſrael; on Sennacherib and his boaſting army for their pride and arrogancy in blaſpheming the Lord God of Iſrael; on Korah, Dathan, and their company, for deſpiſing the government of Moſes; it hath ſometimes fell viſibly on individuals, as in the caſe of Herod, who was ſmitten of God and eaten of worms; likewiſe on Annanias and Sapphira for lying to the Holy Ghoſt: theſe were judgments immediately from God.

And although many are permitted to go amazing lengths in ſin, and every thing they put their hand to ſeems to proſper, for the rod of God is not upon them, they are not plagued like other men, nor chaſtened as other folks, yet they muſt die, and after death comes the judgment; and many that have eſcaped from an earthly bar of judicature, yet they ſhall never eſcape from the bar of a juſt God.

I come now to the laſt thing propoſed.

We are this day met, being the day appointed for a general faſt, and there is a voluntary ſubſcription opened for the defence of our country at the Bank, and I hope none of us that have ability will be backward in lending that aſſiſtance that is in our power. I cannot help thinking it is of God, by the ſpirit that is gone forth. If I am not wrong informed,

formed, the ſubſcriptions already amount to the ſum of one million three hundred thouſand pounds.

I will briefly give you now my reaſons why I think it our duty to ſubſcribe towards the ſame.

Firſt. I think it a duty we owe our offſpring and the riſing generation, to ſecure the civil and religious liberty we now enjoy, for ſhould the French be permitted to overrun this country, they would ruin our manufactures, cripple our commerce, and bring the nation to a ſtate of beggary; and ſhall our offſpring have to reflect and ſay, Our fathers were a ſet of covetous men, that griped their money faſt, and would not part with a ſmall portion of the ſame to ſecure and protect to us thoſe bleſſings and privileges, civil and religious, which their anceſtors ſo nobly ſtept forward to ſupport with their lives and fortunes, that they might hand down to their poſterity the bleſſings which you and I now enjoy?

Secondly. It is a duty we owe to ourſelves and fellow citizens. What have we got that is not in the country? Hath not a good God given us all that we have? Is our property in the funds, the funds and the country go together; is it in land or houſes, ſtill it is in the country, and the value in a great meaſure depends upon trade and commerce; is it in trade or in the ſhop, ſtill it is in the country; have

have you a few comfortable things about you, are they not in the country? Then, as fellow members of ſociety, we are now called upon to part with a ſmall portion of the ſame, not by the force of the ſword, but by a voluntary act, for the defence of the whole. Which of you would like a company of French ſoldiers to be quartered upon you, who, like the Midianites upon Iſrael, would eat up your corn and your cattle, and leave you without ſuſtenance?

Thirdly. It is a duty we owe to the church of God. Here ſome may ſtartle, and ſay, How is the church of God concerned? I anſwer, That unleſs the government is ſupported and upheld the church of God cannot expect tranquillity. Hath not the Lord told you, and that by his ſervant Jeremiah, to ſeek the peace of the city and to pray for it? for in the peace (that is the external) you ſhall have peace (that is religious peace); and pray what ſtate was the church of God in when the Jewiſh nation was overrun by Jabin king of Canaan? Read Judges iv. and v.

Deborah tells us, that before ſhe aroſe a mother in Iſrael, the highways were unoccupied and travellers paſſed through by-paths. What does ſhe mean by highways? Without doubt the public means of God's appointment; there was no public aſſemblies of the Lord's people permitted. No: the travellers paſſed through by-paths; they met when and where they could; not publicly, but privately.

But when God in mercy delivered the Jews by the hand of Deborah and Barak, then the public worſhip of God in the tabernacle was again carried on; and I am fully perſuaded, that if once the French are permitted to overrun this country, you and I ſhall no more be permitted to meet together, as we do this day, protected by the laws, ſo that none dare diſturb us or make us afraid; here we can worſhip God after the dictates of our own conſcience.

But were we under the government of the French (which God forbid!) a people that have trampled on all laws human and divine, that have openly ridiculed and blaſphemed God and his word, witneſs the Age of Reaſon, wrote by that devil in human ſhape, I mean Tom Paine, whoſe doctrines and principles have been ſo greedily ſwallowed by the French.

Have they not aboliſhed the ſabbath-day, formed the month into decades, and by theſe means think to obliterate the worſhip of God from among the children of men?

Again, you ſee what particular notice the Holy Ghoſt hath taken to hand down to us the very names of the men that lent an helping hand in building the walls of Jeruſalem after the return of the Jews from captivity; read Nehemiah iii. And why? Becauſe the wall is not built, Sanballat, Tobiah, and their companions, will not permit the temple to be built, nor

the worſhip of God to be carried on; and by the ſame parity of reaſoning, if our external walls are not ſupported and defended, the church within cannot go on peaceably.

Theſe are my reaſons; I have therefore opened a book for ſubſcriptions, which lies in the veſtry, and have hereby diſcharged the duty I owe to my offspring, my country, and the church of God.

But ſome may be ready to ſay, Will it not be ſubſcribing to ſupport war, bloodſhed, and murder? I anſwer, No. Suppoſe a gang of deſperate villains threaten to plunder my houſe, under the ſpecious pretence of putting it in order, ſhall I be guilty of murder by calling in my friends, or hiring men and arming them, to defend that which God hath given me? Surely every man of common ſenſe will ſay, No.

God expreſsly told the Jews by Mordecai, Eſther viii. 11, "to ſtand for their lives, to oppoſe and deſtroy all that would moleſt or deſtroy them." Have they not threatened us with an invaſion? are they not preparing for the ſame? Have they not plainly told us, that they will not make peace with us till they have humbled us, that is to ſay, till they have robbed us of all that is dear to us as Engliſhmen or as Chriſtians?

But ſome may ſay the money may be wrong applied. Be it ſo; I have diſcharged my duty and my conſcience;

science; I have done that which laid within my power, and therefore shall have no reflection on my mind (whatever the event may be) that I have not withheld that assistance which my country needed and my ability afforded in a time of necessity. I leave these things with you, and may God direct you to his honour and glory, and your country's good. Amen.

THE END.

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